

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A recording/viewing support apparatus for supporting recording or viewing of a program selected by a user as a desired program from among programs scheduled to be aired as digital broadcasts, said apparatus comprising:

program specifying information obtaining means for obtaining program specifying information that specifies ~~said~~ the desired program based on an operation by ~~said~~ the user;

weather forecast information obtaining means for obtaining, based on ~~said~~ the program specifying information, weather forecast information for a relevant weather at a location where ~~said~~ the digital broadcast ~~is~~ will be received during a broadcast time period of ~~said~~ the desired program as relevant weather forecast information;

determining means for determining, based on ~~said~~ the relevant weather forecast information, whether ~~said~~ or not the relevant weather will be so bad ~~or not~~ as to degrade ~~said~~ the desired program in image quality or sound quality; and

notifying means for giving, when said determining means determines that ~~said~~ the relevant weather will be bad, a notice of a possibility of degradation in image quality or sound quality of ~~said~~ the desired program.

2. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

searching means for searching, when said determining means determines that ~~said~~ the relevant weather will be bad, for a same program to be aired at a different time, which is a program that is equal in content to ~~said~~ the desired program and is scheduled to be aired in a different time period ~~different~~ from the broadcast time period of ~~said~~ the desired program; and

same program information displaying means for displaying information that specifies ~~said~~ the same program to be aired at the different time found by said searching means.

3. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said program specifying information obtaining means includes:

receiving means for receiving ~~said~~the digital broadcast and generating a transport stream;

program information displaying means for displaying a program list based on program sequence information included in ~~said~~the transport stream; and

input operation means, operated by the user for selecting ~~said~~the desired program from among programs shown in ~~said~~the program list, for obtaining ~~said~~the program specifying information based on the operation by said user.

4. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said program specifying information obtaining means includes:

receiving means for receiving ~~said~~the digital broadcast and generating a transport stream;

program information displaying means for displaying a program list based on program sequence information included in ~~said~~the transport stream; and

input operation means, operated by the user for selecting ~~said~~the desired program from among programs shown in ~~said~~the program list, for obtaining ~~said~~the program specifying information based on the operation by said user; and
wherein said searching means searches for ~~said~~the same program to be aired at the different time by using ~~said~~the program sequence information.

5. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein:

when said searching means finds ~~said~~the same program to be aired at the different time, said weather forecast information obtaining means obtains weather forecast information for the weather during a broadcast time period of ~~said~~the same program to be aired at the different time as new relevant weather forecast information;

when ~~said~~the new relevant weather forecast information is obtained, said determining means determines, based on ~~said~~the new relevant weather forecast information, whether or not the weather during the broadcast time period of ~~said~~the same program to be aired at the different time will be so bad ~~or not~~ as to degrade ~~said~~the desired program in image quality or sound quality; and

said notifying means gives the notice of the possibility of degradation in image quality or sound quality of ~~said-the~~ same program to be aired at the different time during the broadcast time period when the weather is determined as bad.

6. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said searching means searches analog broadcast programs in addition to not only digital broadcast programs but also analog broadcast programs for ~~said-the~~ same program to be aired at the different time.

7. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said weather forecast information obtaining means includes receiving means for receiving a data broadcast, and obtains ~~said-the~~ relevant weather forecast information from ~~said-the~~ received data broadcast.

8. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said weather forecast information obtaining means includes interfacing means for accessing ~~to~~ the Internet, and obtains, through ~~the~~ said interfacing means, ~~said-the~~ the relevant weather forecast information via the Internet.

9. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when a probability of precipitation included in ~~said-the~~ relevant weather forecast information is larger than a predetermined value, said determining means determines that ~~said-the~~ relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade ~~said-the~~ desired program in image quality or sound quality.

10. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein when a laundry index included in ~~said-the~~ relevant weather forecast information is smaller than a predetermined value, said determining means determines that ~~said-the~~ relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade ~~said-the~~ desired program in image quality or sound quality, the laundry index being a numerical value indicating how well laundry hung outside will dry based on the relevant weather.

11. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising: storing means for storing correlation data that relates a probability of precipitation to a receive level degradation probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of ~~said the~~ digital broadcast becomes smaller than a predetermined level threshold value,

wherein said determining means calculates, based on ~~said the~~ correlation data, the receive level degradation probability corresponding to the probability of precipitation included in ~~said the~~ relevant weather forecast information and, when the calculated receive level degradation probability is larger than a predetermined probability threshold value, determines that ~~said the~~ relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade said desired program in image quality or sound quality.

12. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, wherein:

the relevant weather information includes a laundry index that is a numerical value indicating how well laundry hung outside will dry based on the relevant weather;

said recording/viewing support apparatus further ~~comprising:~~ comprises storing means for storing correlation data that relates a ~~the~~ laundry index to a receive level degradation probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of ~~said the~~ digital broadcast becomes smaller than a predetermined level threshold value; and:

~~wherein~~ said determining means calculates, based on ~~said the~~ correlation data, the receive level degradation probability corresponding to the laundry index ~~included in said relevant weather forecast information and,~~ when the calculated receive level degradation probability is larger than a predetermined probability threshold value, determines that ~~said the~~ relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade ~~said the~~ desired program in image quality or sound quality.

13. (Currently Amended) A recording/viewing support apparatus for supporting recording or viewing of a program selected by a user as a desired program from among programs scheduled to be aired as digital broadcasts, said apparatus comprising:

program specifying information obtaining means for obtaining program specifying information that specifies ~~said the~~ desired program based on an operation by said user;

weather forecast information obtaining means for obtaining, based on ~~said the~~ program specifying information, weather forecast information for a relevant weather at a location where ~~said the~~ digital broadcast ~~is~~ will be received during a broadcast time period of ~~said the~~ desired program as relevant weather forecast information;

storing means for storing correlation data that relates the weather forecast information to a receive level degradation probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of ~~said the~~ digital broadcast is smaller than a predetermined level threshold value; and

notifying means for obtaining the receive level degradation probability corresponding to ~~said the~~ relevant weather forecast information, and notifying ~~said the~~ user of the obtained receive level degradation probability as information which is indicative of a possibility of degradation in image quality or sound quality of ~~said the~~ desired program.

14. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 13, wherein ~~said the~~ correlation data relates ~~said the~~ receive level degradation probability to a probability of precipitation or a laundry index included in ~~said the~~ relevant weather forecast information, the laundry index being a numerical value indicating how well laundry hung outside will dry based on the relevant weather.

15. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said weather forecast information obtaining means includes receiving means for receiving a data broadcast, and obtains ~~said the~~ relevant weather forecast information from ~~said the~~ received data broadcast.

16. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said weather forecast information obtaining means includes interfacing

means for accessing to the Internet, and obtains, through ~~the~~ said interfacing means, ~~said~~ the relevant weather forecast information via the Internet.

17. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein when a probability of precipitation included in ~~said~~ the relevant weather forecast information is larger than a predetermined value, said determining means determines that ~~said~~ the relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade ~~said~~ the desired program in image quality or sound quality.

18. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, wherein when a laundry index included in ~~said~~ the relevant weather forecast information is smaller than a predetermined value, said determining means determines that ~~said~~ the relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade ~~said~~ the desired program in image quality or sound quality, the laundry index being a numerical value indicating how well laundry hung outside will dry based on the relevant weather.

19. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising: storing means for storing correlation data that relates a probability of precipitation to a receive level degradation probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of ~~said~~ the digital broadcast becomes smaller than a predetermined level threshold value,

wherein said determining means calculates, based on ~~said~~ the correlation data, the receive level degradation probability corresponding to the probability of precipitation included in ~~said~~ the relevant weather forecast information and, when the calculated receive level degradation probability is larger than a predetermined probability threshold value, determines that ~~said~~ the relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade ~~said~~ the desired program in image quality or sound quality.

20. (Currently Amended) The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 2, ~~further comprising~~ wherein:

the relevant weather information includes a laundry index that is a numerical value indicating how well laundry hung outside will dry based on the relevant weather;

said recording/viewing support apparatus further comprise storing means for storing correlation data that relates a the laundry index to a receive level degradation probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of ~~said the~~ digital broadcast becomes smaller than a predetermined level threshold value; and, ~~wherein~~

said determining means calculates, based on ~~said the~~ correlation data, the receive level degradation probability corresponding to the laundry index included in ~~said the~~ relevant weather forecast information and, when the calculated receive level degradation probability is larger than a predetermined probability threshold value, determines that ~~said the~~ relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade said desired program in image quality or sound quality.